DC
SUPERMAN
IN ACTION COMICS
739
$1.95 US
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NOV 97
1997
46
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SUPERMAN IN CHAINS!
LOIS IN JAIL!
SCORN IN LOVE!
BY IMMONEN & MARZAN, JR.
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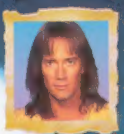
THE REAL HERCULES · THE ONLY XENA

STARRING IN THEIR FIRST FULL-LENGTH ANIMATED FEATURE

LUCY LAWLESS



KEVIN SORBO

STARRING THE VOICES OF KEVIN SORBO AS THE REAL HERCULES AND LUCY LAWLESS AS THE ONLY XENA, THIS FEATURE-LENGTH ANIMATED SPECTACULAR CATAPULTS THE MYTHICAL EXPLOITS OF THEIR POPULAR LIVE-ACTION HIT TV SERIES INTO A NEW DIMENSION!

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FEATURING THE VOICES OF: KEVIN SORBO LUCY LAWLESS MICHAEL HURST RENEE O'CONNOR
SONGS WRITTEN BY MICHELE BROURMAN & AMANDA McBROOM
MUSIC BY JOSEPH LoDUCA WRITTEN BY JOHN LOY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SAM RAIMI & ROBERT TAPERT
DIRECTED BY LYNNE NAYLOR
A RENAISSANCE PICTURES PRODUCTION

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ONLY ON VIDEO! • OWN IT OCTOBER 14!

ATH +++...
datalinecodeDRAPER1
auth...NTRAPseq46.02...
working...
...initGEOLOCKseq2..01...
tokenSUPERM...
working... initLOCK
...initHOTELWIRE...
requestDRAPER2auth@
REMOTE...waiting...
COME ON, DRAPER. THE JET WON'T WAIT, Y'KNOW.
MMM, COMING, CARLA.
bipbOOp
NOT EXACTLY METROPOLIS TAXI SERVICE, BUT AS LONG AS IT GETS ME OUT OF HERE...
HUGH'S RENT -ALL
IT'S NOT IN A REPORTER'S BLOOD TO GET NERVOUS, AND NO ONE EVER CALLED LOIS LANE PROVINCIAL...
...BUT SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY THAT ABORIGINAL ELDER TALKED ABOUT "THE END OF ALL THAT IS" MADE THE DANGERS OF URBAN LIFE SEEM TAME.
THESE CITY PATROLS HAVE BECOME AN UNFORTUNATE DAILY REGIMEN.
WITH X-RAY VISION AND SUPER-SPEED, SUPERMAN USED TO APPEAR ON THE SCENE IN AN INSTANT, BUT NOW IT'S AN EFFORT TO FIND THE CRIMES FIRST.
OF COURSE, IT DOESN'T HELP THAT MY NEW POWERS AREN'T YET FULLY UNDER CONTROL...
"MADDY, WE MUST HAVE MAXED BALLROOM ATTENDANCE! I THINK ALL OF MAGGIN HIGH IS HERE! HOW'D YOU SWING THIS WITH YOUR DAD?"
"EASY, SUZIE. WHEN DADDY HEARD THAT A FIRE IN THE GYM RUINED HIS BABY'S HOMECOMING, HE PULLED THE APPROPRIATE STRINGS..."
CENTENNIAL HOTEL

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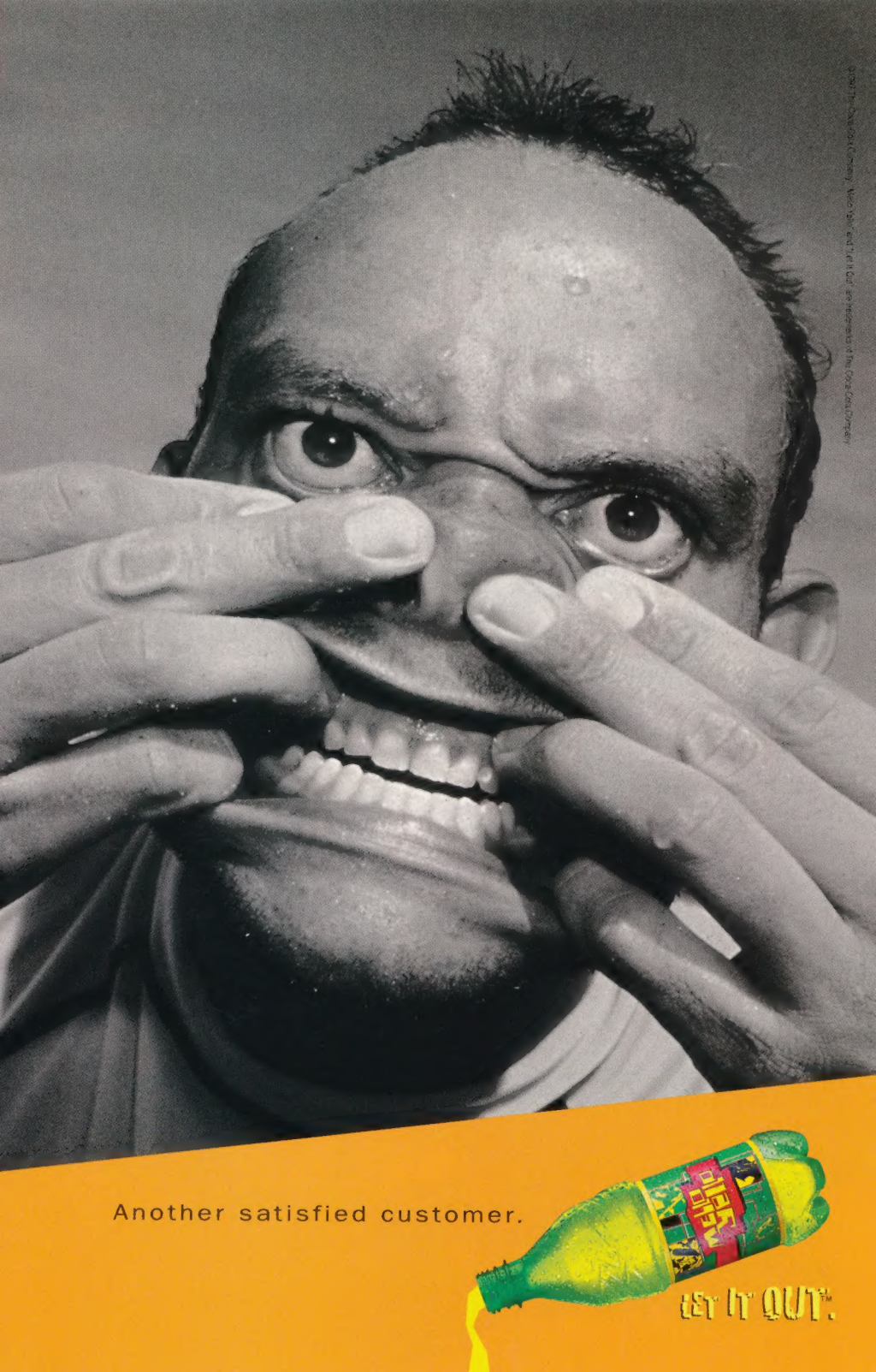
HOMECOMING 1997
...AND VOILÀ! BEING MANAGER OF THE CENTENNIAL HOTEL HAS ITS PERKS AFTER ALL.
BEATS DECORATED HOOPS--
--AND THE ODOR OF SWEAT-SOCKS.
SAD THAT YOU CAN'T IMPROVE ON SOME PEOPLE'S FASHION SENSE, THOUGH. CHECK HER OUT. TOTALLY 1994.
'KAY, THE RIOT GRRRLS ARE TAKIN' A BREAK. UH, DJ PAUL'S GONNA ENTERTAIN FOR A WHILE.
Y'ALL ARE ROCKIN' WIT' THE BEST NAOWW...
I THOUGHT WE WERE GETTING SCARE TACTICS. IT'S LIKE, THESE GUYS'VE NEVER PLAYED ANYWHERE.
HEY, WHAT'S KEEPING ASH, ANYHOW? SHOULDN'T SHE BE HERE BY--
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS HE'S MY DATE!
NOW LET US IN!
ASHBURY... FIRST!
THANK YOU, SCORN.
MAKE WAY, PLEASE ASHBURY ARM-STRONG AND HER HANDSOME ESCORT COMING THROUGH!

ATH +++... connex@56. 6kbps... DRAPER2auth@REMOTELOC...
...initCOUNTDOWN... 15:00:00... 14:59:59... 14:59:58...
OH, ASH, IT'S TOO BAD MERE WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE PEGGY BANCROFT'S DATE. TO DIE FOR.
AND HER BOYFRIEND'S CUTE, TOO.
CAN'T USE THE PLAY-BY-PLAY, GIRLS. I NEED DETAILS.
I'M LUCKY I'M EVEN HERE. MY DAD WAS A HARD SELL.
THE HARDER THEY COME, THE HARDER THEY FALL, ASHBURY...
YEAH, ASH, YOUR KILLER INSTINCT NEVER FAILS.
WELL, VISUAL IMPAIRMENT HAS HEIGHTENED MY OTHER SENSES--
--RIGHT, SCORN?
SCORN? HEY, YOU BETTER NOT BE ROCKIN' SOME OTHER GIRL'S WORLD...

KA-THOOOM!
PARTY TRAPPINGS
STUART IMMONEN - story & pencils
JOSE MARZAN, JR. - inks
BILL OAKLEY - letters
GLENN WHITMORE - colors
PRISMACOLOR - separations
MAUREEN McTIGUE - assistant ed.
JOEY CAVALIERI - party animal
SUPERMAN created by
JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER


Another satisfied customer.
DIET
LET IT OUT.

OHMIGOD!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
KRASH!
EVERYONE, STAY CALM!
trikle
ASHBURY OKAY?
SURE, I'LL LIVE. WHAT'S GOING ON?
NOT SCORN'S FAULT. PROMISE.
THE BUILDING'S ON FIRE!
LOOKOUT
I'M TRYING
WATCH IT
BAD NEWS PEOPLE RUN. PEOPLE PANIC.
AN EXPLOSION AT THE CENTENNIAL HOTEL? THIS CERTAINLY CHANGES MY PLANS FOR THE EVENING!
THRAK-KOOM!

NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE. WHOEVER DID THIS WAS A PRO.
THE BLAST HAS WEAKENED THE UPPER FLOORS ENOUGH TO THREATEN, BUT NOT TO COLLAPSE...
...YET.
I SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONVERT THE FLAMES' HEAT ENERGY INTO A DYNAMIC ENERGY WEB STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD THE STRUCTURE TOGETHER.
MY HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICS IS ALL COMING BACK TO ME...
SEE THAT? SUPERMAN'S UP THERE!
KLLLLP
ALMOST GOT IT...
VVVVV
...WHAT?
VVZHOKKK!
ARHH--!
FEELS LIKE... FADING AWAY...

TASTE THE RAINBOW®
BITE-SIZE CANDIES
Skittles
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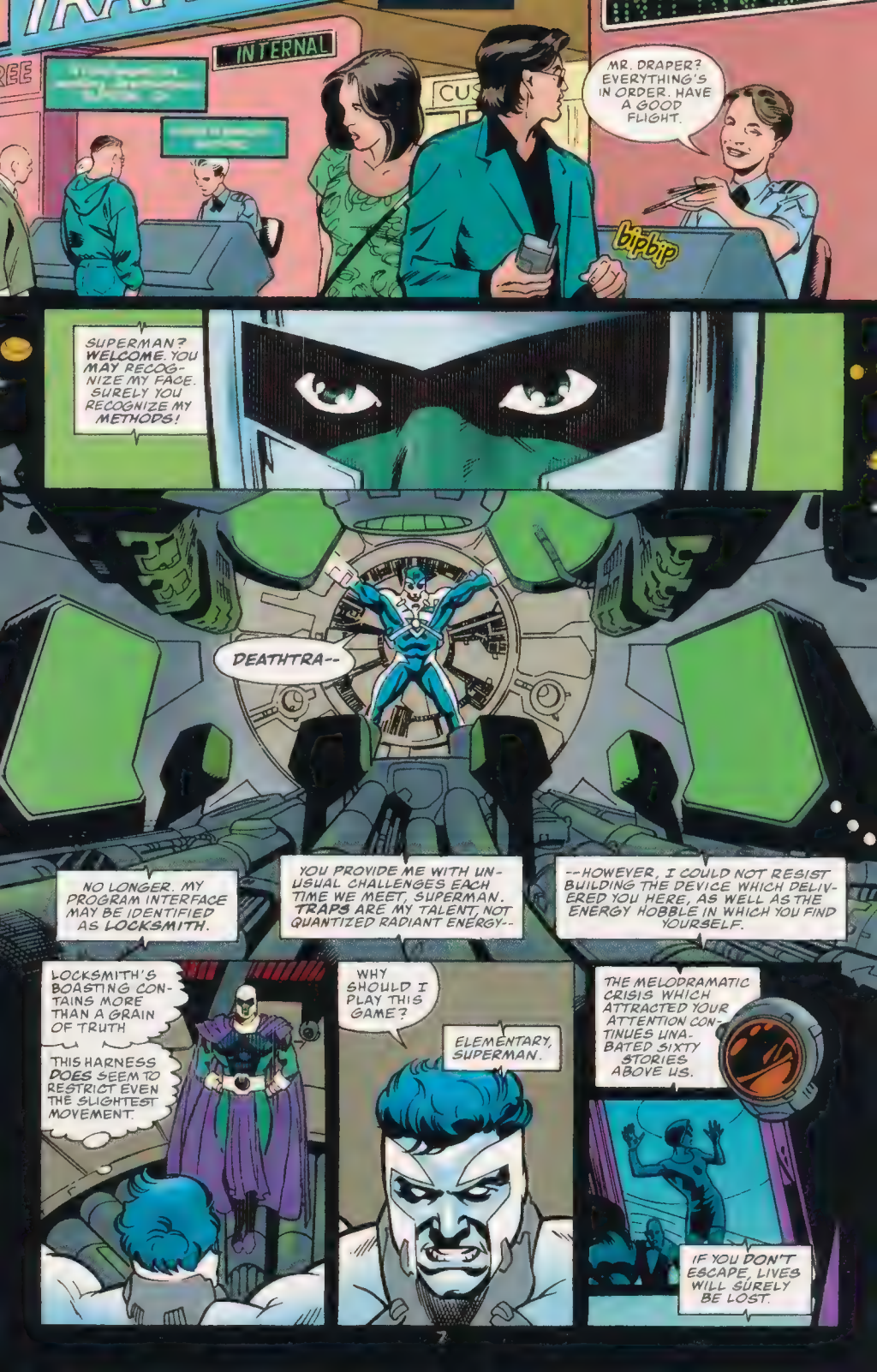
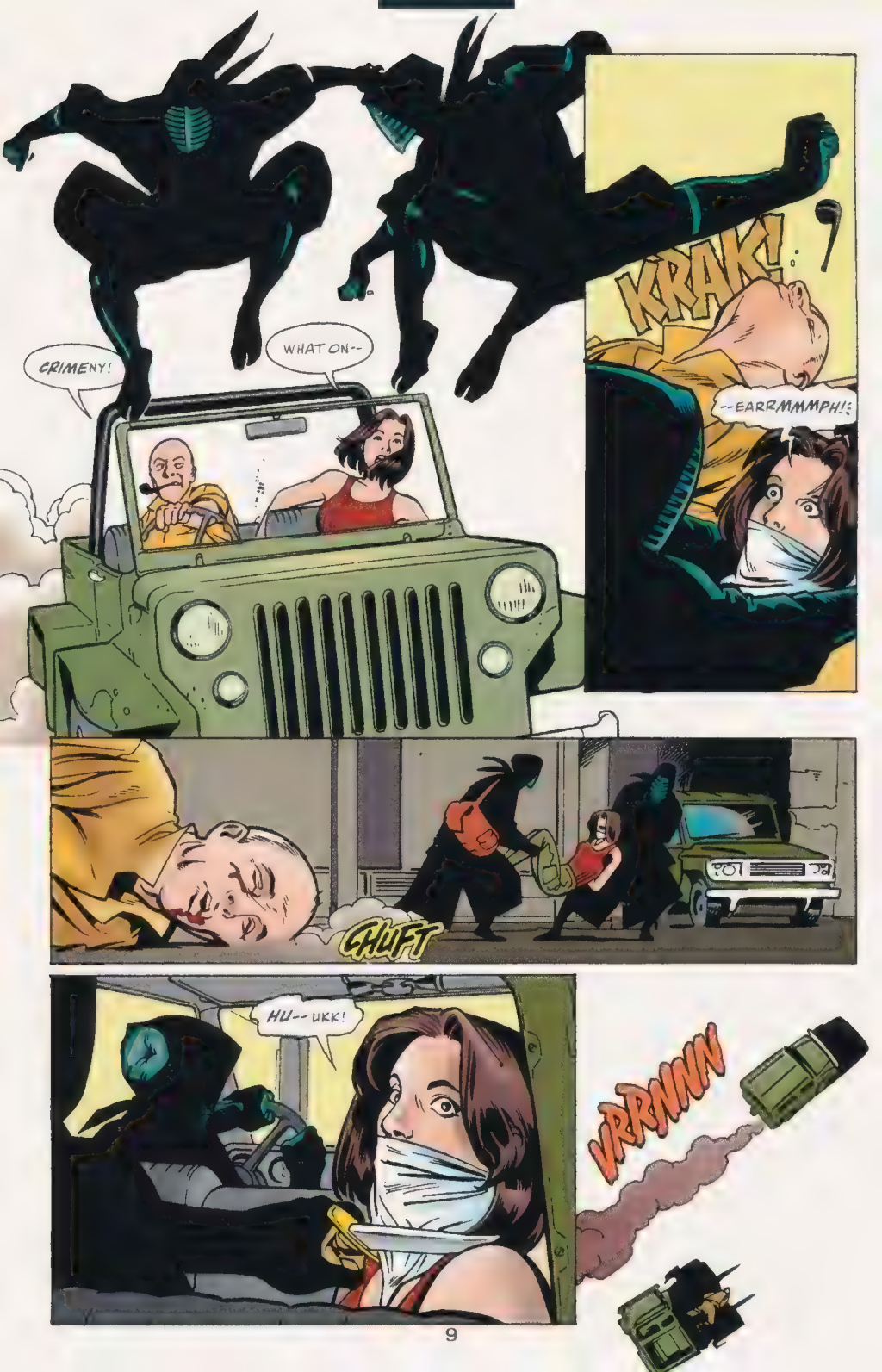
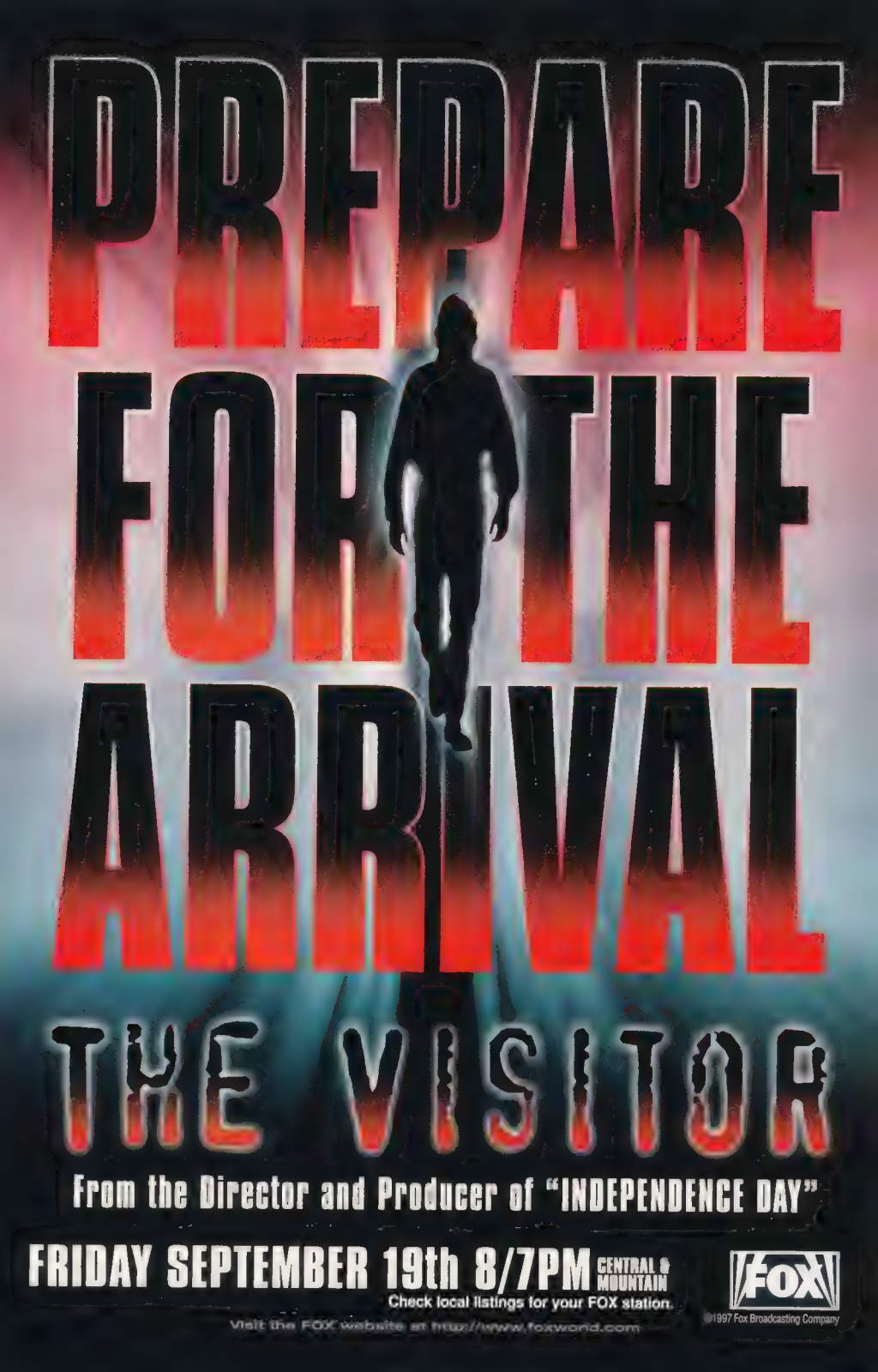

INTERNAL
MR. DRAPER? EVERYTHING'S IN ORDER. HAVE A GOOD FLIGHT.
bipbip
SUPERMAN? WELCOME. YOU MAY RECOGNIZE MY FACE. SURELY YOU RECOGNIZE MY METHODS!
DEATHTRA--
NO LONGER. MY PROGRAM INTERFACE MAY BE IDENTIFIED AS LOCKSMITH.
YOU PROVIDE ME WITH UNUSUAL CHALLENGES EACH TIME WE MEET, SUPERMAN. TRAPS ARE MY TALENT, NOT QUANTIZED RADIANT ENERGY--
--HOWEVER, I COULD NOT RESIST BUILDING THE DEVICE WHICH DELIVERED YOU HERE, AS WELL AS THE ENERGY HOBBLE IN WHICH YOU FIND YOURSELF.
LOCKSMITH'S BOASTING CONTAINS MORE THAN A GRAIN OF TRUTH
THIS HARNESS DOES SEEM TO RESTRICT EVEN THE SLIGHTEST MOVEMENT.
WHY SHOULD I PLAY THIS GAME?
ELEMENTARY, SUPERMAN.
THE MELODRAMATIC CRISIS WHICH ATTRACTED YOUR ATTENTION CONTINUES UNABATED SIXTY STORIES ABOVE US.
IF YOU DON'T ESCAPE, LIVES WILL SURELY BE LOST.

HUGH'S RENT-ALL
HAW, HAW, HAW!
YOU WANT A WHAT?
I NEED ONE-WAY TRANSPORT TO PERTH. YOU MUST HAVE HEARD OF IT. IT'S IN YOUR COUNTRY
THA'S RIGHT. IT SURE AIN'T AMERICA.
WOT MAKES YOU THINK YER PREPARED FER TH' DANGERS OF THE OUTBACK, MISSY? D'YOU EVEN GOT A DRIVER'S LICENSE?
YEAH...
LOIS LANE? METROPOLIS? YOU--YOU AIN'T THE DAUGHTER O' SAM LANE, ARE YA?
WELL...YES. YOU KNOW MY FATHER?
I RECKON THERE AIN'T A BLUE BERET FROM YEMEN WHO DON'T REMEMBER IRONGUTS LANE!
YOU JUST TELL HUGH HILL-SMITH WHERE YER HEADED, AN' I'LL TAKE YOU THERE M'SELF!
uh.. THANKS.
SAM AN' ME WERE U.N. PEACEKEEPERS IN TH' MID-SIXTIES, STATIONED IN AR RAB' AL KHALI, NO MAN'S LAND IN SAUDI ARABIA.
YOU WAS JUST A BABE THEN. YOUR OLD MAN HELD ONTO YOUR PHOTO LIKE IT WERE HIS LAST BREATH.
YOU'VE GROWN INTO A HEALTHY YOUNG FILLY, THAT'S CERT.


CRIMENY!
WHAT ON--
KRAK!
--EARRMMMPH!:
CHUFT
HU-- UKK!
VRRNNN

WHY DO IT, LOCKSMITH? WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF IT?
SATISFACTION OF A JOB WELL DONE, OF COURSE.
I COULD PHASE INTO HUMAN FORM IF THAT CAMERA WASN'T RECORDING EVERY MOVE--
I PRIDE MYSELF ON QUALITY MATERIALS--
--KEEP HIM TALKING, DISTRACTED, WHILE I TRY A MASSIVE PULSE OF ENERGY...
--FORETHOUGHT, AND EXECUTION.
YEARRG!
VVVVA
AAZZHK!
POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP, SUPERMAN. ANY ENERGY YOU EXPEND IS FED BACK INTO THE SYSTEM EXPONENTIALLY.
BRUTE FORCE WON'T BE YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE, SUPERMAN.
THINK, OR OTHERS WILL SUFFER.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--REACHED OUR CRUISING ALTITUDE. PASSENGERS MAY USE ELECTRONIC DEVICES--
tokenSUPERM_ failESCAPE_
initOFFENSseq2.02 ...working.
NO ROOM
I CAN'T
HEY, DON'T USE THAT ELEVATOR! THE FIRE!
ASHBURY STAY. SCORN NEEDED.
I'LL BE OKAY, SCORN.
WHERE WOULD I GO?
BACK AWAY! NOW!
FU-PASSH!
AAAHH! MY EYES!
SPANNG!
WE'RE FALLING!
UNNG!
SSSHHUUU
EERNGN!

:UNNFF!:
CHANNG!
CHANNG!
SNAKT
WE STOPPED!
OPEN IT!
ALL RIGHT. WE CAN START CLIMBING OUT!
HURRY. CABLE SLIPPING.
EASY. GOTCHA.
THERE'S ONLY TWO OF US HOW LONG'VE WE GOT?
TWO... THREE FEET.
HUMAN... JOKE...

KONAMI
XXL
SPORTS SERIES™

I started kicking
inside my momma.
And I haven't stopped since.
Right now, the only thing
between me and a
world title is 8 yards and
a goalkeeper. And my foot
only listens to you.
Bury it.

AGES 13 AND OLDER
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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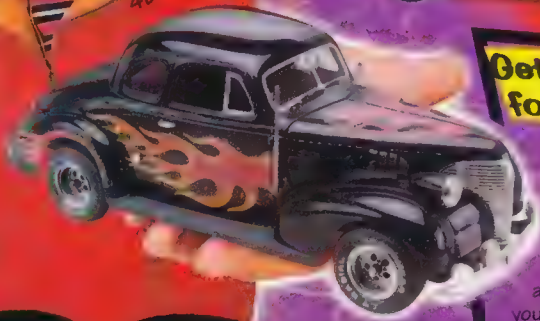
KONAMI

ACTUALLY, I'M DISAPPOINTED, SUPERMAN.
NOT THAT I EXPECTED YOU TO HAVE ESCAPED, BUT RATHER THAT YOU HADN'T MADE MORE OF AN EFFORT.
EFFORT ISN'T ALWAYS PHYSICAL. I LIKE TO THINK I DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE.
WHEN IT COMES TO MANIPULATING ENERGY--
--I MAY NOT HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCE OR EXPERTISE--
THE MONITORS! SYSTEMS FAILING! HOW--?
VOOP VOOOP VOOP
--AFTER ALL, I'M PRETTY NEW AT THIS KIND OF THING.
BUT WHEN YOU PIT MAN AGAINST MACHINE--
ENGAGING BACKUP PROCESSING ENGINE.
subsys V4PBACK1.04...
--WOULDN'T YOU BET ON THE LIVING?

YOU AWAKEN, MS. LANE. I AM... PLEASED.
WHO--?
YOU DO NOT KNOW ME?
BLAME THE INFERNAL DEVICE I MUST WEAR ON MY THROAT, THIS SHAMEFUL MILLSTONE THAT ALLOWS ME TO SPEAK AT ALL.
BUT IF YOU DO NOT RECOGNIZE MY VOICE--
--PERHAPS YOU KNOW MY FACE!
THE FACE OF DEATH!
RAJIV NAGA?
BUT INTERPOL --THEY ARRESTED YOU--
THE AUTHORITIES MEAN NOTHING TO A MAN OF MY... INFLUENCE.
BUT YOU--
--YOU DESERVE MY PERSONAL ATTENTION
CHUK!

Built anything Cool lately?



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yes ____ no ____

If so, how many? _____

Please circle the kit you want:

1D 2D 3D 4D

Today's date _____

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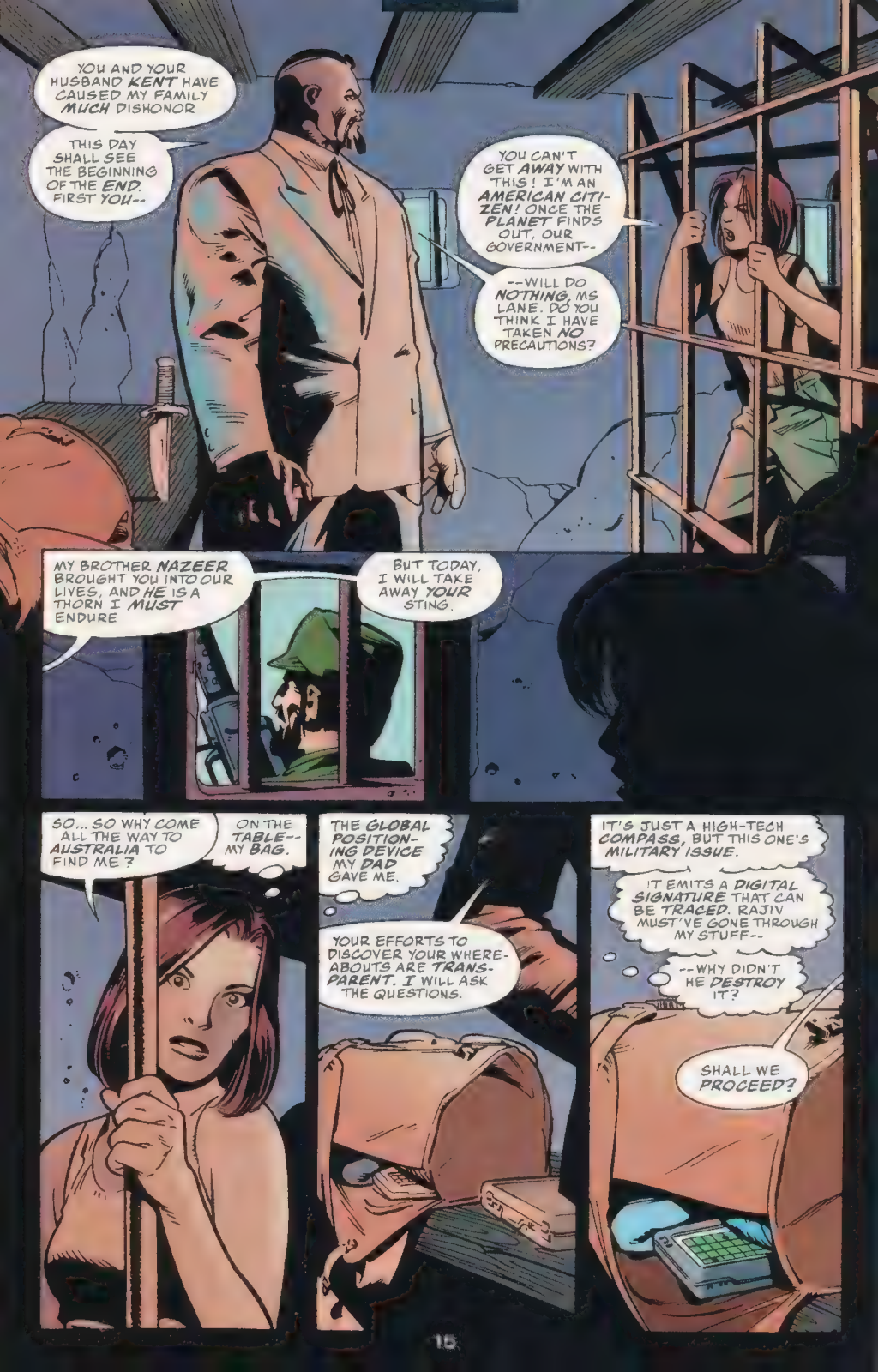
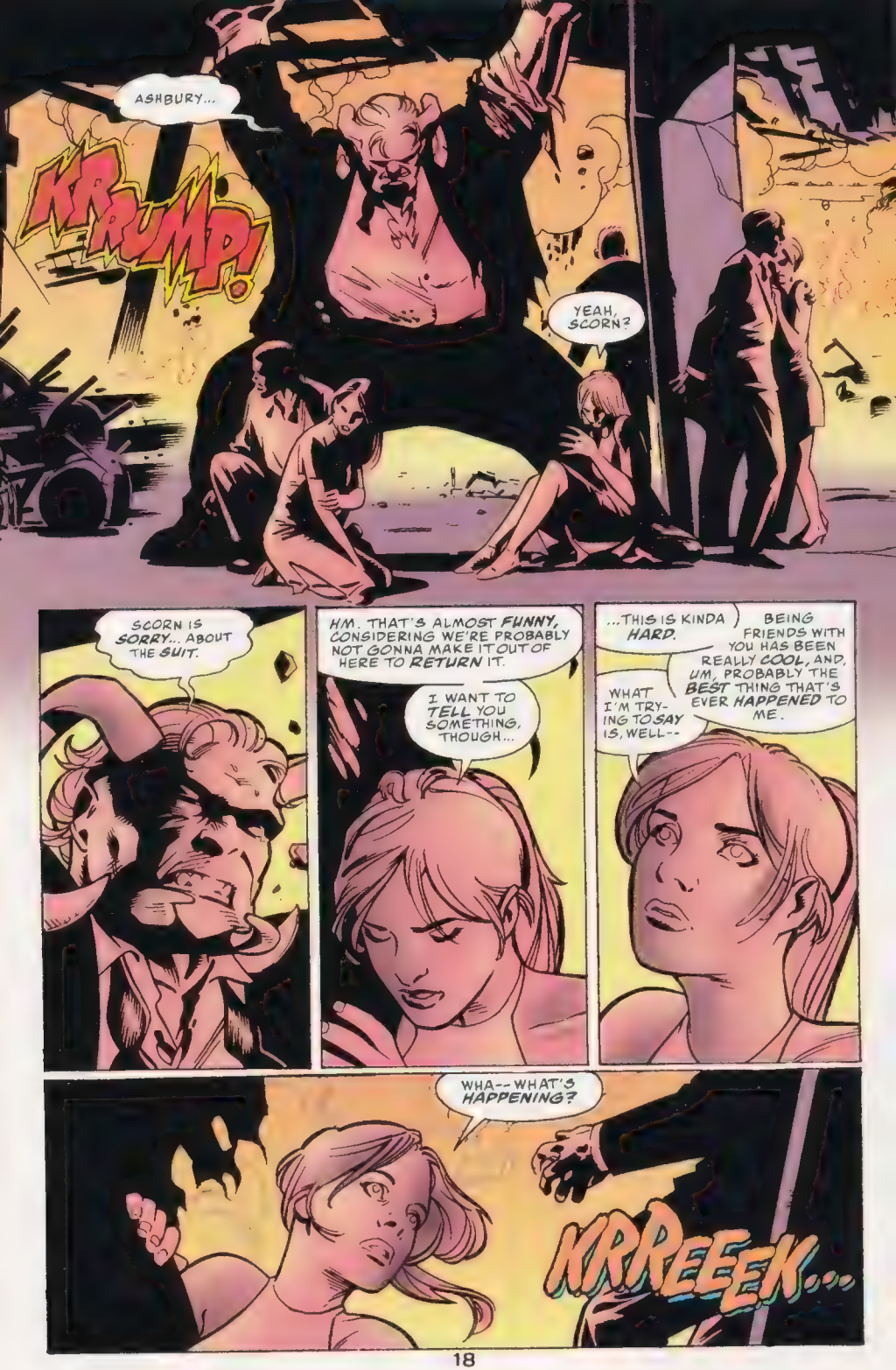

YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND KENT HAVE CAUSED MY FAMILY MUCH DISHONOR
THIS DAY SHALL SEE THE BEGINNING OF THE END. FIRST YOU--
YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS! I'M AN AMERICAN CITIZEN! ONCE THE PLANET FINDS OUT, OUR GOVERNMENT--
--WILL DO NOTHING, MS LANE. DO YOU THINK I HAVE TAKEN NO PRECAUTIONS?
MY BROTHER NAZEER BROUGHT YOU INTO OUR LIVES, AND HE IS A THORN I MUST ENDURE
BUT TODAY, I WILL TAKE AWAY YOUR STING.
SO... SO WHY COME ALL THE WAY TO AUSTRALIA TO FIND ME?
ON THE TABLE-- MY BAG.
THE GLOBAL POSITIONING DEVICE MY DAD GAVE ME.
YOUR EFFORTS TO DISCOVER YOUR WHEREABOUTS ARE TRANSPARENT. I WILL ASK THE QUESTIONS.
IT'S JUST A HIGH-TECH COMPASS, BUT THIS ONE'S MILITARY ISSUE.
IT EMITS A DIGITAL SIGNATURE THAT CAN BE TRACED. RAJIV MUST'VE GONE THROUGH MY STUFF--
--WHY DIDN'T HE DESTROY IT?
SHALL WE PROCEED?

subsys V4PBACK1.04 ... FAIL... initAUTORESTORE ... FAIL...
initDATA GENERATOR ... FAIL ... init FILENCRYPT... WORKING...
init DRAPOOR authJUMPOFF ... waiting...
CONFUSED, LOCKSMITH?
I'VE BEEN ABSORBING ALL THE ENERGY I COULD FROM YOUR MACHINES.
I DIDN'T KNOW IF I COULD CONTAIN IT ALL BEFORE I DID--
--THIS!
YOUR POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP ONLY WORKS IF I EXPEND ENERGY.
YOU YOURSELF GAVE ME THE CLUES TO ESCAPE... DID YOU WANT TO LOSE--?
I HAVEN'T LOST, SUPERMAN. NOT UNTIL I'M CAUGHT.
INITIATE JUMP-OFF SEQUENCE.
VZZZZP
VZZP

IF I ACCESS THE NETWORK BEFORE IT COMPLETELY SHUTS DOWN, MAYBE I CAN TRACK...
HOLOGRAM'S GONE. CAMERA'S OUT, TOO.
...TOO LATE. THERE WAS A REMOTE SIGNAL, BUT SOME KIND OF DIGITAL WORM DESTROYED THE UPLINK CODES.
THAT'S A PROBLEM FOR A DIFFERENT TIME, I GUESS. LOCKSMITH SEEMS THE KIND OF VILLAIN THAT'S LIKELY TO RETURN.
IT SAID WE WERE RIGHT BELOW THE FIRE...
...AND RIGHT NOW...
...I'M NEEDED.


ASHBURY...
KRUMP!
YEAH, SCORN?
SCORN IS SORRY... ABOUT THE SUIT.
HM. THAT'S ALMOST FUNNY, CONSIDERING WE'RE PROBABLY NOT GONNA MAKE IT OUT OF HERE TO RETURN IT.
I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, THOUGH...
...THIS IS KINDA HARD.
BEING FRIENDS WITH YOU HAS BEEN REALLY COOL, AND, UM, PROBABLY THE BEST THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME.
WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS, WELL--
WHA--WHAT'S HAPPENING?
KRREEEEK...

FREEZE...

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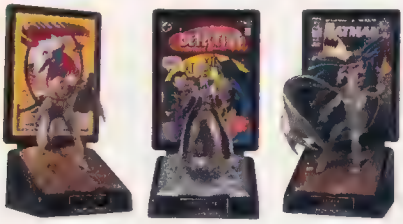
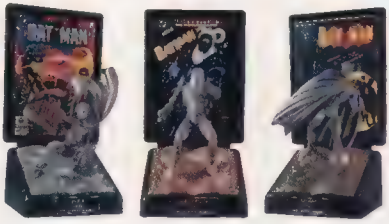


Superman™ Golden Age | The Joker™ Silver Age | Batman™ Modern Age

DC Comics Series #1



Robin™ Silver Age | Mr. Freeze™ Modern Age | Batman™ Golden Age

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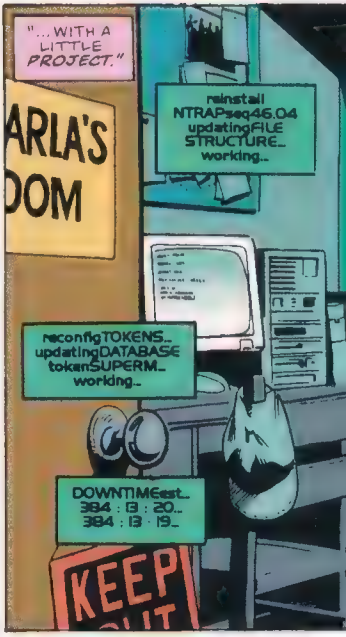
THE HOTEL'S STILL INTACT, STRUCTURALLY. I THINK I CAN KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE HERE--
--A COHESIVE ENERGY MATRIX USING HEAT FROM THE FIRE WILL EXTINGUISH IT--
--AND FUSE FERROUS PARTICLES IN THE BUILDING, LEAVING IT STRONGER THAN BEFORE--
--IF STILL A LITTLE SMOKY.

OKAY, DRAPER, I'M PUTTING MY FOOT DOWN. ARE YOU WORKING, OR ARE YOU ON VACATION?
SORRY, CARLA. I'M JUST ABOUT FINISHED REVIEWING THESE COMPANY REPORTS.

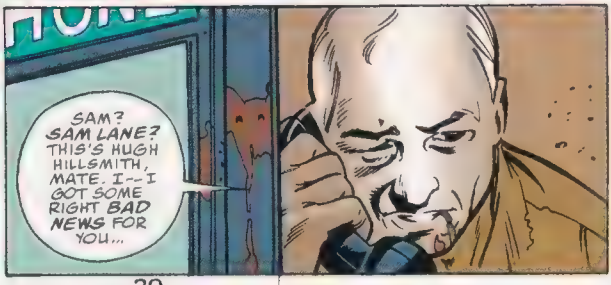
THERE. DONE. DRAPER INDUSTRIES WILL WAIT
UH-HUH. RIGHT. ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT CONCOCTING SOME BRILLIANT TRAP?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU'VE GIVEN YOUR ALTER EGO A WORKOUT...

NOT THIS TIME. THAT'S A DIFFERENT FATHER/DAUGHTER HOLIDAY.
I HAVEN'T BORED YOU, HAVE I?
I'VE KEPT BUSY...


"...WITH A LITTLE PROJECT."
ARLA'S
OOM
reinstall NTRAP.sec46.04 updatingFILE STRUCTURE... working...
reconfigTOKENS... updatingDATABASE tokenSUPERM... working...
DOWNTIMEest... 384 : 13 : 20... 384 : 13 : 19...
KEEP

RRRING! RRRING! RRRING!
SAM? ...GET THAT...

WHO'S THERE? D'YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?


SAM? SAM LANE? THIS'S HUGH HILLSMITH, MATE. I--I GOT SOME RIGHT BAD NEWS FOR YOU...

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BRANDY • It Hurts Like Hell (Remix)

TOTAL • No One Else (R&B Remix)

A TRIBE CALLED QUEST (Featuring Faith Evans) • Stressed Out (Remix By Rog Big Mix)

CASE • Touch Me Tease Me

MONICA • Don't Take It Personal (Just One Of Dem Days)

3 ANGELS • Lady

THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G. • One More Chance/Stay With Me (Remix)

WU-TANG CLAN • C.R.E.A.M.

DEBORAH COX • Sentimental

JUNIOR M.A.F.I.A. • Gettin' Money (Can Get Money Remix)

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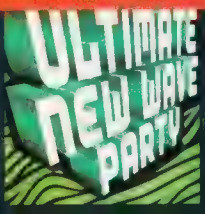

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SUZIE? THAT YOU? OMIGOD, I THOUGHT YOU'D--
WE BERKOWITZES ARE A TOUGH BREED...
M.F.D.
YOU GUYS GONNA LEAVE ALL THESE TOTALLY KEWL FIREFIGHTERS FOR ME, OR WHAT?
SCORN?
IT SEEMS THESE KIDS' PARTY TOOK PLACE ON A BAD NIGHT. LUCKY YOU WERE THERE TO SAVE SOME OF THEM.
SU-PER-MAN
WITH MY HELP, THE POLICE WILL INVESTIGATE THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE
IT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY TO DO THE RIGHT THING. YOU SACRIFICED YOURSELF UP THERE, AND THAT TAKES AN EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY.
I'M PROUD OF YOU, SCORN. I'M GLAD WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE.
I DON'T THINK DIRK ARMSTRONG REALIZES WHAT A GOOD JUDGE OF CHARACTER HIS DAUGHTER IS
;UUURRRP;
HERO.
HEY, SCORN, I GUESS IF SUPERMAN CALLS YOU ONE, THEN YOU MUST BE.

"I THINK A HOT SHOWER AND ABOUT TWELVE HOURS' SLEEP IS IN ORDER."
"NNH"; I CAN'T REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I HAD A SORE BACK.
AT LEAST LOIS IS DUE BACK TODAY. IF I ASK NICELY, I MAY GET A MASSAGE...
...OR MAYBE--
--SAM?!
KENT! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU WENT A.W.O.L. ON ME!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT PACKING. I GOT BOTH OF US OUTFITTED I'LL DEBRIEF YOU ON THE WAY TO THE AIRPORT.
GET IT IN GEAR, KENT! WE GOTTA SAVE MY LITTLE GIRL!
CONTINUED IN MAN OF STEEL#74 !

RE: ACTION

ACTION COMICS #734

*Hi, gang. Before we start cookin' this month with your comments regarding ACTION #734, we need to remind everyone to please-please-**please** address the specific Superman lettercolumn you're writing to. We've had tons of letters lately, but many of them merely say "Superman office." In a perfect world, your envelope should state which issue of the books your letter is referring to, or at least which Super-title column you're sending it to. It'll make everyone's life so much easier, specifically mine, since I open and read just about every single one of the letters. Thanks!*

That said, on with the show...

Dear Super-Editors:

I have just finished reading ACTION COMICS #734, and I have to say that I am amazed at the response to Superman's new look. I find the new suit exciting, and the new powers interesting.

I loved the old suit and powers, but I am very much willing to give the new look a chance.

K.O.
LONDON, ENGLAND

*Thanks, K.O.—or should we say, "T.K.O."? (I know, I know, that was **really** bad...)*

Dear Editor (re ACTION COMICS #734):

Here was one for slugfest fans—a select group that likely numbers in the several millions. But probably for more than them exclusively, because of the several cross-cutting subplot dramas involved here.

No American comic-book character has greater continuing allure than the all-new Man Beyond Tomorrow. To be sure, we Superman purists still decry the costume change, both for sentimental and aesthetic reasons. Still, the "Crisis in Kandor" should draw everyone in, and yet, it may not do so.

Seasoned scribe David Michelinie wrote intimately of revolutionaries and Peacekeepers, leading up to a breathtaking cliffhanger. The result was a story about a bottled city under extraordinary pressure. The same probably can be said about Kandor's warring factions—the Peacekeepers, having their jobs squarely on the line, the Rebels seeking to reverse a depressed culture and break through the claustrophobic barrier. Mr. Michelinie is more than an engaging Superman writer. At his very core, he's an adventure enthusiast in the best sense.

There may be those who know how the Crisis in Kandor (as well as the new blue-skewed Superman) turns out. For others, getting there is most of the fun. Personally, I'm willing to let the drama—and costume controversy—unfold.

HOWARD T. KIDD
MANILLA, IA

Sounds like you've got the right approach for all of this, Howard, unlike our next veteran lettercol contributor...

Dear Editors (re ACTION #734):

If Superman suddenly has the miraculous expertise to alter his pigmentation and clothing, as he did this issue when he morphed into a security guard, why is Blue Boy still going around dressed in that new uniform of his? If he can convert his appearance to virtually anything he conceives, why not have him try something a bit more dignified—like his old costume? While he's at it, perhaps he could reclaim his old powers, too. That way, we'd have some slight idea what he's capable of instead of having previously unseen abilities manifest themselves whenever it's convenient.

He's not the only one with unique abilities. Your new character, Faern, not only can catch whirling metallic blades without injury, but is also quite capable of dropping ominous hints that she's not to be trusted in virtually every other sentence. For example, she knows all about Kandor; she's been waiting for Superman a very long time; we have no idea just how wise she is, etc. Either she's a very dangerous rebel or just Tolos in drag.

Speaking of Tolos, why didn't Superman impersonate him when the Peacekeeper who looks like a metallic version of Swamp Thing attacked? The Kandorians seem to have an intense fear that could be exploited. Or is Superman limited to only one overly opportune disguise per issue?

If nothing else, Faern's "plan" to have the Atom appear to be eaten was something you don't see every day. True, while a bit hard to swallow, at least it showed the character's intestinal fortitude.

I do wonder, however, what "micro-sponges" are. Perhaps they're what janitors use to soak up really small spills? I haven't chowed down on any lately, but wouldn't the taste give it away? Well, who knows—maybe the Peacekeeper was having micro-sponge cake for dessert and never noticed.

I enjoyed your clever cliffhanger. Now we

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get to choose between whether the Kandorians will freeze or suffocate first. Me, I'm easily satisfied with either option. Once they're gone, maybe we can see the supporting cast again.

JOE FRANK
SCOTTSDALE, AZ

**Sigh* Thanks for your usual warmth, Joe. We did consider Superman's ability to alter his appearance from the very beginning, and the reason he doesn't go back to his old look is simply that he doesn't perceive himself with that look anymore. He's adapting to what he's evolved to, just like many of us humans do.*

Dear DC:

I'm writing in response to the changes in the Superman books lately, and the terrible response you've received. Let me first say that I'm okay with the changes. Not happy, just okay. I know that eventually he'll be back to Jerry and Joe's Man of Steel. I am, however, disgusted by the complaints you've received.

Yes, Superman is outwardly different. He dons a suit of white and blue that bears little resemblance to the familiar blue, red and yellow. His powers are energy-based. Super-strength, X-ray vision and heat-vision-enhanced shaving are on hiatus. Clark Kent is a truly mild-mannered reporter. Nevertheless, Superman is still a hero, still fighting for Truth, Justice and the American Way.

How dare we profess, in one breath, our loyalty to the house of El, and in the next damn it to certain death? Fickle fans make for short-lived products. Though I hope I will never see the day that Superman truly dies, I know that such a lack of enthusiasm could mean his doom.

I, for one, will stay. I'm looking forward to a good story, and anticipating the day when our hero returns to his original powers. I'm in for the long haul. Superman was always there for me when I needed him most, and I don't intend to desert him now. The question is, how many of you so-called "greatest fans" will join me?

MIKE VICK
CRESCENT CITY, CA

Fortunately, Mike, Superman lives, and the number of readers is growing, thanks to diehard fans like you. In appreciation, we offer you this month's Baldy award—a mainstay in our lettercols for years to come!

Dear Editors:

As a longtime fan of Superman (and DC Comics in general), I decided to wait and give you gentlemen the benefit of the doubt. After all, it isn't fair to judge the work of others until you've actually seen some of it. After reading ACTION #734, I feel it's now time to share my thoughts on the new Superman.

From the beginning, I suspected that your alterations would be temporary ones. The new costume would be around for maybe six to seven months, and then it would be passed on to some new character (although slightly altered), while Clark once again dons the eternal Red and Blue. When I tried to explain this to my wife, she just nodded a lot.

Recent storylines seem to lend credence to at least some parts of my theory. According to your lettercolumn, Superman will find "a solid lead as to who's responsible for his change of powers...." If 60 years of comics history has taught us anything, it's that anything that's done...can be undone. The orchestrator of these radical changes must surely know of a way to reverse them.

Secondly, Scorn has adopted Superman's old battle togs, much as Draaga did when Clark was under the influence of the Eradicator. I imagine that helps you ensure some sort of copyright protection. (Please correct me if I'm wrong on this.) When these changes ultimately come undone, I imagine there will be some sort of "changing of the guard" ceremony as Superman takes back his uniform. It wouldn't surprise me if you made a few minor cosmetic changes to the uniform. (I've read articles about various pencillers who wish they could get rid of the red trunks.) But in the end, Superman will still have a red cape.

And of course thirdly, the seemingly overwhelming negative fan reaction. I really like the new costume. It's simple, recognizable and immediately relates to you the hero's powers. I guess most folks just don't like seeing it on Superman. It's gonna make a good-looking action figure, though!

I have read every issue of every Superman title since the "restart" after CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS. I've seen Superman kill, go schizoid (more than once), exiled, powerless, overpowered, amnesiac and time-tossed. I've even seen him die and come back to life. And after each crisis, the Last Son of Krypton once again assumed his red and blue uniform, largely unchanged but somehow, in some way, matured, ready to continue the "never-ending battle." I'm sure we could all stand to see that happen one more time.

Yours till Kal starts wearing Kryptonite Green.

DAVID S. ELLIS
WADING RIVER, NY

Aw, you blew our next big storyline, David...

—Mike McAvennie
Saying hello to Nick's mom out there, wherever she is.

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

NEXT WEEK: Lois Lane is Naga's prisoner in MAN OF STEEL #74, but help's on the way! Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's...Sam Lane? Hoo-boy... All this in seven days, plus Louise Simonson, Scot Eaton and Dennis Janke introduce us to "The Dragon's Teeth!" Brrrr!

IN TWO WEEKS: Everything's anew in SUPERMAN #130! Accompanying our new Big Blue is a major new enemy for him to fight, and a brand-spankin'-new weight problem for Clark Kent! All in fourteen days by those new-age guys Dan Jurgens, Norm Breyfogle and Joe Rubinstein!

IN THREE WEEKS: Think Supes had problems last week? He's got it times three in twenty-one days with ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #553! All brought to you by the terrific trio of Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett and Denis Rodier, it's worth three times the wait!

NEXT ISSUE: Boy, the Lanes sure keep runnin' into problems! In ACTION #740, it might be Lucy Lane's turn, as she may well be the latest victim of...daaaaaaa Ripper! Hey, you don't think Stuart Immonen and José Marzan, Jr. are tryin' to rile things up when they've only just taken over the book, do ya? Sorry, it'll take twenty-eight days to find out!

Consider your cover-age taken care of by those artistes Stuart Immonen, José Marzan, Jr., and Patrick Martin!

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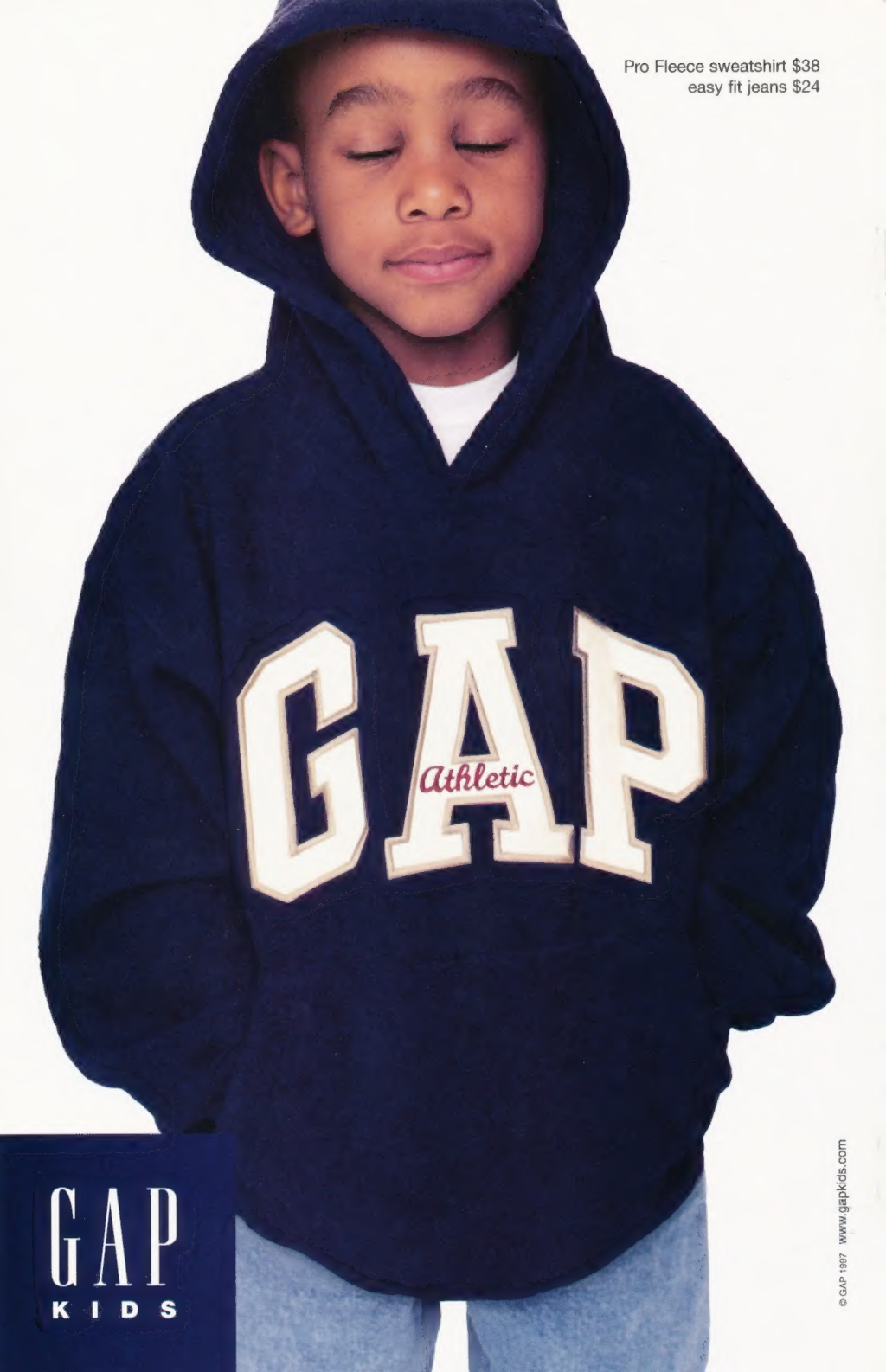
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